

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 02217 250744Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 241517Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0678
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

C O N F I E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 2217

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, SW
SUBJ: APPOINTMENT OF NEW DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN SWEDISH
MFA

REF: STOCKHOLM 1678

1. SWEDISH MFA HAS ANNOUNCED THAT KNUT THYBERG, CURRENTLY CHIEF OF THE MFA'S SECOND DIVISION, RESPONSIBLE FOR WESTERN EUROPEAN AND WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, WILL SUCCEED LEIF LEIFLAND AS DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS WHEN THE LATTER MOVES UP TO BECOME SECRETARY GENERAL ON JUNE 1 (REFTEL). ON ASSUMING HIS NEW DUTIES, THYBERG WILL GAIN THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR.

2. KNUT THYBERG (FULL NAME: OLIN KNUT THYBERG -- PRONOUNCED "TEE-BERRY-) HAS HEADED THE MFA SECOND DIVISION SINCE 1972, AND IN RECENT YEARS ALSO SERVED AS LEIFLAND'S DEPUTY AND AS ACTING DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN LEIFLAND'S ABSENCE. BORN IN 1926 TO A SWEDISH DIPLOMAT AND AN AMERICAN MOTHER, THYBERG JOINED THE FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1951. HE HAS SERVED IN HELSINKI, PRAGUE, WARSAW, THE UN (1956-57), WASHINGTON (1958-59),
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TEHRAN, BONN, AND BAGHDAD, HIS LAST POST ABROAD. HIS FIRST MARRAGE TO A COUSIN OF CURRENT SWEDISH AMBASSADOR TO THE US WACHTMEISTER ENDED IN DIVORCE, AND IN 1971 HE MARRIED HIS CURRENT WIFE, GISELA, A WEST GERMAN.

3. THYBERG IS TALL AND SLIM WITH A NOTABLY UN-SWEDISH SUBTLE SENSE OF HUMOR. HIS E

GLISH IS EXCELLENT, HIS MANNER CHARMING,
AND HE HAS BEEN VERY OPEN WITH OFFICERS OF THIS EMBASSY.
THYBERG'S MANNER STRIKES SOME AS OCCASIONALLY FRIVOLOUS,
BUT HE IS HARD-WORKING AND WELL-VERSED ON ALL ASPECTS OF
SWEDISH FOREIGN POLICY, AND HE IS CONSIDERED VERY FRIENDLY
TO THE U.S. THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT LEIFLAND HAD A
HAND IN PICKING HIS SUCCESSOR, AND IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT
THYBERG, WHO HAS ALREADY BEEN HOME FOR FIVE YEARS, RECEIVED
THE SLOT RATHER THAN A DIPLOMAT FROM THE FIELD. FROM THE
U.S. PERSPECTIVE, THE PLACEMENT OF THESE TWO MEN IN THE TOP
TWO CAREER POSITIONS IN THE MFA WOULD SEEM TO BODE WELL FOR
OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.
PERRY

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